

of physical rejuvenation as only a myth of ancient lineage disguised in quasi-scientific garments.

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POPULATION

Irish Free State. *Census of Population, 1926. Vol. V, Part I. Ages, Orphanhood, and Conjugal Conditions.* Compiled by Department of Industry and Commerce. Dublin, 1929. Stationery Office. Pp. viii+224. Price 2s. 3d.

It once happened that in the writer's absence from home his better half was required by a sergeant of police to fill in an official document stating how much of his small agricultural estate was under potatoes, fruit, etc. To this she made the natural reply that she had not the faintest idea. "Aah!" said he, "put down what ye please; sure 'tis only for statistical purposes."

This being the attitude of the official collectors of statistics, it is not surprising that the census authorities in the Free State have to contend with the usual difficulties caused by inaccurate entries, to a more than usually aggravated extent.

Nevertheless, it is clear from the present part of the Census Report that for them difficulties only exist to be surmounted, and Mr. Geary's memorandum on the construction of the Free State Life Table, No. 1, gives some indication of the success which has crowned their efforts. Besides this Life Table, which appears to have been included almost as an afterthought, this volume deals with "Ages, orphanhood, and marital conditions, classified by areas only." In it two very remarkable facts are brought to light. The first of them, to which Mr. Hooper draws attention in his all too short explanatory notes, is the very low proportion of married persons in the Irish Free State, especially in the earlier ages. An international comparison is made on p. 125, when we find that of twenty-four

countries from which statistics are available, the Free State easily leads in the percentage of unmarried. The following is an excerpt from this table:

COUNTRY	PERCENTAGE UNMARRIED			
	Male		Female	
	Age Group 25-29	Total 15 and over	Age Group 25-29	Total 15 and over
Irish Free State	79.8	56.2	61.8	46.9
Northern Ireland	61.6	48.8	52.4	46.2
Finland (next highest)	61.7	49.2	51.0	43.5
England and Wales	44.6	36.5	41.0	36.8
France	—	32.4	—	28.2
Germany	45.4	37.9	37.1	35.4

The very high emigration from the Free State, which was checked during the War years, makes it unsafe to dogmatize either as to the cause, or the course, of this excess of bachelordom, but it appears to have reached its maximum somewhere between 1901 and 1911, and now to be slightly on the decline; and it is not unreasonable to connect the increase between 1861 and 1901, with the decrease in the birth rate during the same period in the other more married countries.

The phenomenon, which is probably eugenic in its results, is more marked in the rural districts than in the towns, which come about half-way between the average values for the Free State and those for Northern Ireland. At the same time, the effective birth rate, as measured by the number of children aged 0-4 per married woman aged 15-44, is markedly less in the towns, and it is perhaps permissible to doubt whether contraception is quite as unknown in Ireland as is commonly supposed.

The other remarkable fact is the increasing maleness of the population. From 1841-81 there was an excess of males only in the age groups up to 14, with the slight exceptions of the 25-29 group in 1861 and the 20-24 group in 1871. In 1891 all groups up to 24 had an excess of males. In 1901 there

were added the age groups 30-34 and 65-74; in 1911 all groups up to 54 were 'male,' except 25-29, and in 1926, in spite of the absence of the British Army, all up to 64, except the same group, which is notoriously apt to be "female," owing to the ladies' reluctance to pass the age of 30. When it is remembered that the male age distribution in the Free State displays the same deficiency as in other combatant countries between the ages of 20 and 50, though not to the same extent, it will be seen that some explanation is required.

There seem, in fact, to be at least three contributory causes: In the first place, the fall in the infantile death rate, always differential in favour of the female, has increased the comparative survival of male children; in the second place, there is everywhere a migration of domestic servants from rural areas to adjacent towns, and, whatever views we may hold about "Ireland a Nation," the island is ineradicably a rural portion of the British Isles. The third cause is rather puzzling, though it may be to some extent influenced by the second. If Mr. Geary's Free State life table be examined, it will be seen that from age 2 to age 54 inclusive, the female death rate is higher than the male, whereas in the corresponding life tables for England and Wales, published in 1927 from data collected five years earlier, the male death rate is higher than the female except at age 5, and from age 11 to age 15 inclusive. The following extract from the tables may be of interest:

Qx, THE CHANCE OF DYING WITHIN THE YEAR

Age	MALE		FEMALE	
	Irish Free State	England & Wales	Irish Free State	England & Wales
0	·07716	·08996	·06346	·06942
10	·00166	·00181	·00195	·00180
20	·00401	·00349	·00447	·00306
30	·00529	·00434	·00590	·00392
40	·00705	·00688	·00747	·00532
50	·01130	·01179	·01139	·00915
60	·02428	·02561	·02394	·01897
70	·04913	·05997	·04647	·04646

Whatever the causes, the shortage of eligible ladies in rural areas is very marked—in rural Leinster there are but 66,962 unmarried women between 15-44, while there are 96,471 bachelors of the same age—and there are, in consequence, comparatively few young widows in the country, in spite of the rather advanced age of the husbands. It's an ill wind. . . .

STUDENT.

SEX AND SOCIETY

May, Geoffrey. *Social Control of Sex Expression*. London, 1930. Allen and Unwin. Pp. 217. 12s. 6d. net.

AMONG the many recent books about sex, this one stands out as a useful reminder that in this matter, as in others, both our present and our future are rooted in our past. For here we find a well-documented, and withal a readable volume, presenting, in little over two hundred pages, an informative history of varying methods for the control of sex-expression in different ages.

The first part deals with the primitive outlook, and the Jewish (earlier and later) and early Christian concepts. This portion of the book (forty-four pages only) is unduly short, especially in respect of the early Christian period. It is also the least satisfactory part of the work. There is both room and need for a fuller account of sub-apostolic and patristic thought, which so powerfully shaped ecclesiastical dogma and law; perhaps as specially showing the origin of divorce *à mensâ et toro*. Perhaps this scantiness of treatment might be amended in a later edition; as also might some of the expressions on page 44, which give rise to a grave suspicion of "confusion of persons" not in a theological but an historical sense.

The main part of the book deals admirably with the rise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in England after the mission of Augustine, and with the inextricable way in which ecclesiastical